

Marketing in Asia, Malaysia: Get to Know Manish Bahl, VP & Head of Centre for the Future of Work, APAC at Cognizant



“Trying to influence humans alone won’t be enough in the future; brands will also need to influence algorithms,” says **Manish Bahl**, VP & head of the Centre for the Future of Work. “Every industry and business will need to become ‘B2HM’ — Business to Human and Machine — and the most successful brands will be the ones that earn a trusted reputation with both customers and their AI assistants.”



Excerpts from Marketing in Asia’s article:

“I came across this term; business-to-human-and-machine (B2HM) in one of Cognizant’s articles. For those of us still not familiar with this term, can you tell us what exactly that is?”

Trying to influence humans alone won’t be enough in the future; brands will also need to influence algorithms. Every industry and business will need to become ‘B2HM’ — Business to Human and Machine — and the most successful brands will be the ones that earn a trusted reputation with both customers and their AI assistants.

With the emergence of Siri, Google Assistant and Alexa, winning customers is said to be even more challenging. Why is this so?

The human-machine alliance will have a profound impact on how traditional business models will evolve, presenting both opportunities and risks to companies. Every time these interfaces fulfil our needs efficiently and effectively, they take a further step in strengthening their relationship with us.

When we talk about brands and branding in the future, what do consumers expect and how is this different compared to the past?

As mentioned, we recommend that organisations focus on the 3Rs — reputation, relevance and resonance — of serving augmented customers:

- To build brand reputation, companies need to make it easier for customers to see their brand value.
- AI-augmented consumers highly value brands that know them well, anticipate their future needs and deliver the relevant product at the right place at the right time.
- Companies need to engage with consumers through content that resonates with them.

AI-augmented consumers are already overloaded with information online. If companies keep bombarding them with unwanted messages (company updates, for instance), and blatantly ask for likes, comments and shares, a brand may be deranked by social media platforms, review sites and e-commerce marketplaces as a result of actions taken by consumers. Based on consumer preferences collected from our study, we recommend businesses craft their content around four principles: relevance, engagement, accuracy and design (READ).”

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